

GEORGIA DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

PRESS RELEASE

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Contact: Mark McKinnon
(404) 631-1832

Georgia DOT Employee Latoya Scrutchins Receives Garden Club of Georgia District Award

ATLANTA—Georgia DOT Metro Atlanta Acting District Engineer Rachel Brown proudly announced that Heavy Equipment Operator / Acting Assistant Maintenance Foreman Latoya Scrutchins is the Metro Atlanta District winner of the Garden Club of Georgia's annual competition.

Scrutchins has been with Georgia Department of Transportation since July 2004. During that time she has quickly been promoted to the Maintenance Equipment Operator position and she is currently serving as the Acting Assistant Foreman in the Roadside Enhancement department.

Over the years Scrutchins has been recognized for her excellent work with wildflower plots in the Atlanta area. One of the highlights of her career was a feature article in the Atlanta Journal Constitution in November 2007. The article centered on the Garden Club of Georgia's acknowledgement of her exceptional work which resulted in her winning the District honors in 2007.

"Latoya is dedicated to her work and enjoys beautifying our interstates to make motorists' everyday commute a little more enjoyable," said Brown. "She is a true representative of all the hardworking men and women of the Department."

Since 1974, GDOT has partnered with the Garden Club of Georgia in providing resources to plant more than 1,500 acres of wildflowers throughout the state, from the mountains to the coast to the windblown plains.

In support of the program, the club annually presents awards to Georgia DOT employees in recognition of their outstanding efforts in the Wildflower Program. Department managers tour each district in the spring, accompanied by the District Maintenance Foreman. A panel of Club judges then selects winners from each district, and from that group, a statewide winner.

Among the resources to support roadside enhancement, Georgia has introduced two wildflower vehicle tags – the Black-eye Susan and the Purple Coneflower. Combined sales have generated more than \$3.7 million since 1999 for the wildflower program.

Both district and statewide winners receive cash awards through an endowment from Cason and Nancy Callaway known as the Virginia Hand Callaway Awards, named for the person who pioneered the wildflower program.

This year, Garden Club Roadside Chair Kathryn Litton presented Scrutchins with a check for \$200. Ms. Litton also recognized the other winners: Johnny Westmoreland of Northeast Georgia; Rodney Humphries of Southwest Georgia; Roger Evans of Northwest Georgia and Robert McLaughlin of Ware County in Southeast Georgia, who also won the statewide award and \$500.

The Georgia Department of Transportation is committed to providing a safe, seamless and sustainable transportation system that supports Georgia's economy and is sensitive to both its citizens and its environment. For general information on the Georgia DOT, please visit our Website (www.dot.ga.gov).

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GDOT Equipment Operator Latoya Scrutchins (left) receives the Metro Atlanta District's 2009 Wildflower Award from the Garden Club of Georgia's Kathryn Litton.